

November 2015

Going Places

The offsite and adventurous activities newsletter



Going Places is a newsletter for all those using the Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) offsite visits database. The system is now used comprehensively by schools, the youth service, children's centres and children's social care.

Annual consent

Last year to save on the duplication of paperwork for schools to parents/carers the data collection form schools send out at the beginning of the Autumn term had been amended to incorporate the medical and consent form for local visits.

In the guidance for offsite visits <http://schools.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/10-medical-and-consent.pdf> adult participants including staff need to complete a medical and consent form.

Staff only need to complete the form once annually. At the last meeting of the Offsite Visits Group it was agreed to include this form in the school workforce census collection.

This academic year the school workforce census form has been amended. Sue Barber emailed bursars on 27/08/2015 the updated staff data collection report for importing into Sims. Hopefully like the pupils annual consent form this will save on duplication of work.

It must be made clear that a new form is required to be completed if there are any changes.

Offsite visit co-ordinator training

Brian Mallet, the council's offsite visits advisor will be providing accredited OVC training on Monday 16 November. This course is primarily for new OVCs, headteachers and OVCs who have not been accredited.

The training will last the day and gives the chance for OVCs to share experiences and concerns.

If you wish to reserve a place please contact Caroline Moore no later than Friday 06 November 2015, alternatively you can notify Caroline by email on caroline.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or by telephone on 01344 354055.



Offsite visits group vacancy

The offsite visits group is a working group set up to take forward issues raised by schools and CYPL establishments with offsite and adventurous activities. The group includes school offsite visits co-ordinators (OVCs) from primary, secondary and special schools, Larchwood and the council's offsite visits advisor (OVA). The group meets termly for a maximum of 2 hours.

There is currently a vacancy for the primary school representative. If you are interested in the position please contact Caroline Moore by email on caroline.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or by telephone on 01344 354055.

Heightened security

The level of security alert has been at the same high/severe level in London for the past six months and continues to remain constant. Groups visiting London or other large city areas that might be subject to terrorist activity are advised to be extra vigilant when visiting such areas. Groups should be kept under closer supervision when in areas which may be more subject to this type of activity such as museums, galleries and where the public are likely to congregate in large numbers such as popular squares e.g. Trafalgar Square, Covent Garden etc.



Party leaders should have the means to be in contact with coach companies and coach drivers. They should be aware of where coaches will be parked up for the day while on the visit and have a street plan of the area they are visiting so that if necessary the group could walk to the coach park or some other area where they may be able to be met with transport.

If travelling by train it is advised to have a support plan in the event of rail travel being severely disrupted.

They should also ensure that they have the means to contact the necessary personnel at their establishment should any incident occur which might affect them. This can be achieved via mobile phone, text messaging and if possible email.

This should all be featured in the groups risk assessment.

Important reminders

It is important that full addresses and telephone numbers are provided. Brian Mallett cannot approve visits that are missing this information. To assist users, on the planning page of the database there are drop down boxes which have been pre-populated with the contact details of transport companies and destinations regularly used by Bracknell Forest schools e.g. Milestones and the British Museum.

Some users are still sending local trips to Brian Mallett and there a couple of incidents where trips to London were not sent to Brian for approval. The 'outside the locality' tick box' refers to:

- A distance of more than 30 miles
- A travel time of more than 40 Minutes
- Visits to London

Users should note that if you click yes to 'outside the locality, your visit will be sent to the OVA, Brian Mallett for approval and the visit will be subject to approval times and will incur the OVA charges. The OVA provides the third tier of approvals for the more complex visits.

The emergency contact number should not be:

- the number of someone on the visit
- the school number if the visit extends beyond the normal working hours of the school

Future issues of newsletter

If any school would like to share their photos of visits, any advice on good practice or what went particularly well, or raise any issues, the offsite visits group will consider it for future newsletters. Submit articles to Caroline via the details below.

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